

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 198336 TOSEC 090015
ORIGIN NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

66011

DRAFTED BY S/S-O:TGMARTIN

APPROVED BY S/S-O:TGMARTIN

-----116027 052324Z /61

O 052307Z AUG 78 ZFF4

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 198336 TOSEC 090015

EXDIS DISTRIBUTE AS NODIS

FOL RPT STATE 198336 SENT ACTION TEL AVIV INFO CAIRO
JIDDA, TEHRAN & WHITE HOUSE DTD 05 AUG 78

QUOTE: S E C R E T STATE 198336

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR, EG, SA, IR, IS, US

SUBJECT: ISRAELI INTEREST IN ESTABLISHING DISCREET CONTACT
WITH SAUDI ARABIA CONCERNING SOVIET THREAT

REF: TEL AVIV 9309

1. SINCE IT IS UNLIKELY THAT THE SECRETARY WILL BE IN
DIRECT CONTACT WITH SAUDI LEADERS DURING HIS MIDDLE EAST
TRIP, WE HAVE CONSIDERED DESIRABILITY OF RAISING THIS
QUESTION WITH SAUDIS THROUGH ANOTHER CHANNEL AND HAVE COME
TO CONCLUSION IT WOULD BE PREMATURE TO DO SO. WE BELIEVE
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SAUDI LEADERSHIP RECOGNIZES THAT COMMON INTEREST WITH
ISRAELIS IN CHECKING SOVIET INFLUENCE IN MIDDLE EAST AND
AFRICA MIGHT DEVELOP IN TIME UNDER CONDITIONS OF MIDDLE
EAST PEACE. WE BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT SAUDIS WOULD BE
QUITE UNPREPARED TO CONSIDER POSITIVELY A SUGGESTION FOR
SUCH COOPERATION AT THIS TIME, AND MIGHT WELL MISUNDERSTAND
OUR CONVEYING IT. FROM HIGH-LEVEL RECENT CONTACTS WITH

SAUDIS IT IS CLEAR SAUDI LEADERSHIP IS SKEPTICAL THAT
SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS IS BEING MADE IN THE PEACE PROCESS
AND CONSEQUENTLY UNLIKELY TO FOCUS AT THIS TIME ON POSSI-
BILITY OF COOPERATION WITH ISRAELIS IN A FUTURE PEACEFUL
ENVIRONMENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST. WE BELIEVE SAUDIS WOULD
BE TOTALLY UNABLE TO ENTERTAIN CONCEPT OF COOPERATION WITH

ISRAELIS, HOWEVER DISCREET, IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES AND
THAT THEY MIGHT INTERPRET OUR SUGGESTING THIS AS AN
INDICATION THAT WE FEEL PEACE PROCESS IS BOGGING DOWN.

2; THIS SUBJECT SHOULD BE KEPT IN OUR RESPECTIVE TICKLER
FILES BECAUSE, IF THERE COULD BE GENUINE MOVEMENT TOWARD
PEACE, THIS KIND OF ISRAELI-SAUDI RELATIONSHIP IS SOME-
THING WE WOULD WANT TO ENCOURAGE AT THE RIGHT MOMENT.
WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE THAT TIME COME SOONER RATHER THAN
LATER BECAUSE OF GENERAL CONCERN ABOUT RECENT GAINS IN
AFGHANISTAN, PDRY AND ELSEWHERE OF SOVIET-RELATED FORCES.
BUT THIS; UNFORTUNATELY, IS NOT THE RIGHT MOMENT.
CHRISTOPHER UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INSTRUCTIONS, FOREIGN INTEREST REPRESENTATION, THREATS, CAT-B
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE198336
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: O:TGMARTIN
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: P840140-2177
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780894/aaaadamo.tel
Line Count: 82
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 53781d68-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS, EXDIS
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS, EXDIS
Reference: 78 TEL AVIV 9309
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01 aug 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1824917
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ISRAELI INTEREST IN ESTABLISHING DISCREET CONTACT WITH SAUDI ARABIA CONCERNING SOVIET THREAT
TAGS: PINS, PEPR, US, EG, SA, IR, IS, UR
To: TEL AVIV CAIRO MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/53781d68-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014